

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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**HOUSE BILL 1113
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/19/26**

Short Title: Shellfish Leasing Moratoria.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 30, 2026

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXTEND THE MORATORIUM ON SHELLFISH LEASING IN THE NEW HANOVER COUNTY AREA AND TO TEMPORARILY PROHIBIT THE ISSUANCE OF NEW SHELLFISH CULTIVATION LEASES IN CERTAIN AREAS OF PENDER AND ONSLOW COUNTIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

EXTEND SHELLFISH LEASE MORATORIUM IN THE NEW HANOVER COUNTY AREA

SECTION 1.(a) Section 7 of S.L. 2019-37, as amended by Section 12.3 of S.L. 2021-180, reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 7.** Notwithstanding G.S. 113-202 and G.S. 113-202.1, a moratorium on new shellfish cultivation leases and new water column leases for aquaculture shall be imposed for all those waters enclosed by a line beginning at 34° 13.10221' N -77° 48.79544' W on the mainland side near Wrightsville Beach Bridge; running southeasterly to a point at 34° 12.51584' N -77° 47.81847' W on Wrightsville Beach; following the shoreline southwesterly to a point at 34° 11.121' N -77° 48.848' W at Masonboro Inlet; running southwesterly to a point at 34° 10.927' N -77° 48.771' W at Masonboro Inlet; continuing southwesterly to a point at 34° 05.04108' N -77° 52.08324' W near IWW marker #159 continuing running southwesterly to a point at 34° 03.64140' N -77° 53.41338' W on the mainland adjacent to the eastern mouth of Snow's Cut; running northeasterly along the shoreline to the point of beginning. The moratorium shall expire ~~July 1, 2026.~~ July 1, 2031. For purposes of this section, a new shellfish cultivation lease or water column lease shall include applications for either type of lease received by the Secretary but not granted as of July 1, 2019."

SECTION 1.(b) This section becomes effective June 30, 2026, and applies to the Department's consideration of applications for shellfish leases submitted to the Department on or after that date as well as applications for a new shellfish cultivation lease or a new water column lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2019.

SECTION 2. The sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Marine Fisheries, for public education activities and other notifications regarding the moratorium extension provided in Section 1 of this act.

PROHIBIT NEW SHELLFISH LEASES IN PARTS OF PENDER AND ONSLOW COUNTIES



1 **SECTION 3.(a)** Notwithstanding G.S. 113-202 and G.S. 113-202.1, a moratorium
2 on new shellfish cultivation leases and new water column leases for aquaculture shall be imposed
3 for all those waters enclosed by a line beginning at the southeast end post of the northern fenceline
4 of Hampstead Marina, approximately 7.0' due east to the Point of Beginning on the Mean High
5 Water (MHW) Line at $W77^{\circ}41'05''$ $N34^{\circ}21'20''$, thence following the MHW Line northeastward
6 along mainland Pender County to the Onslow County line, thence following the MHW Line ENE
7 along mainland Onslow County to the intersection of the MHW Line with the Jones Onslow
8 Electric Cooperative (JOECO) ROW at $W77^{\circ}22'20''$ $N34^{\circ}31'06''$, thence SSE to the northeast tip
9 of the rock revetment in the JOECO ROW on Topsail Island, thence following the sound side
10 MHW line of Topsail Island WSW to its furthest southern extent at $W77^{\circ}39'42''$ $N34^{\circ}20'42''$,
11 thence WNW to the southern marsh edge of the east entrance to Howard's Channel at $W77^{\circ}40'26''$
12 $N34^{\circ}20'49''$, thence through the following coordinates $W77^{\circ}40'33''$ $N34^{\circ}20'48''$, $W77^{\circ}40'48''$
13 $N34^{\circ}21'00''$, $W77^{\circ}40'49''$ $N34^{\circ}21'06''$, $W77^{\circ}40'53''$ $N34^{\circ}21'12''$, $W77^{\circ}40'57''$ $N34^{\circ}21'12''$ along
14 the marsh edge, thence NW to the point of beginning. The moratorium shall expire July 1, 2028.
15 For purposes of this section, a new shellfish cultivation lease or water column lease shall include
16 applications for either type of lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2025.

17 **SECTION 3.(b)** This section becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies to the
18 Department's consideration of applications for shellfish leases submitted to the Department on or
19 after that date as well as applications for a new shellfish cultivation lease or a new water column
20 lease received by the Secretary, but not granted as of July 1, 2025.

21
22 **EFFECTIVE DATE**

23 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective July 1, 2026.